

Brief Notes

The sum of all practical religion is love.

The religious teacher and preacher, and all who would impart religious truth to others, should not forget that there is power in gentleness, and if therefore they would have power over those whom they teach or impart power to them, they must exercise in the virtue of gentleness. One who passed thru many vicissitudes of experience could say, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." The greatest of all teachers was gentle in his manners and in all his dealings with the children of men.

The word of God is a cluster of divine truth from which not a single jewel can be spared without destroying the symmetry and beauty of the whole.

To work without worry is the secret of a real successful life, and a secret, therefore, which every one should learn. Worry wears more rapidly than work. To worry is sin because it unfits one for the active duties of life. Worry corrects no evil, heals no broken hearts, soothes no sorrows, saves from no sin, neither cheers nor comforts a weary soul; its only mission is to wear, weaken and weary. Why worry?

Life precedes teaching and preaching. One must be a disciple before he can be a true apostle. Teaching is of little value unless there is back of it a life intensely in earnest, a life that believes with all its heart what it teaches, a life of real power. The life, the real, every day life of the teacher, imparts more power to the disciple than what he teaches. One must be with Christ first before he can teach others the vital truths of Christianity. We must live the truths ourselves, work them into our character and habits before we can impress the truth on other hearts. One may chatter volubly about religion and religious things, have a thorough knowledge of the doctrine and ethical principles of Christianity, but have no experimental acquaintance with religion as a *life*; such may teach glibly enough, but there will be no real power in what they say, not because it is not truth, but because it is not truth wrought into the fabrics of the soul that teaches.

President Ripley, of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway system was asked how a young man may best gain the good will and attention of his superiors. He answered, "A man who does good work need make no special effort to bring himself into notice, and any such effort is likely to be annoying to his superiors. The heads of departments know what each man is doing, and are better judges of his work than the employee himself." This is well said and applies to other besides secular callings. It applies to the Christian ministry especially, and in fact to all kinds of Christian work. Good work in any department of life is the very best recommendation.

Christ never asks any impossibilities of us. The poorest gifts and the smallest offerings are acceptable, if they really are our best. It is not great things that Jesus asks of us, but he does ask our best, and if our best means great things, then nothing short of that will be acceptable to him.

Christ never enters the heart to which he is not invited. He stands at the door and knocks, but without the invitation from within to enter, he continues his knockings in vain.

The measure of human duty is human capability; the measure of human responsibility is opportunity.

Notwithstanding the fact that strong drink continues its terrible work, making havoc of the youth of our land, there seems to be some hope of better things to come, and this hope is based upon the statement, not of a temperance or prohibition "crank," but upon the statement of a liquor dealer himself. He says, "To begin with, there is the multiplication of saloons, but of even more mo-

ment in my mind is the fact that the younger generation is not drinking as the old did in the past. No matter how good socially men were they thot nothing of setting in for drinking bouts at tables or at the bar. Now the average man, if he drinks at all, either has it at his house, bought in bulk, so that the retailer is cut out, or else he drops in for a drink in a hurry and gets out again. It hurts my business, naturally, but I cannot but help feeling pleased on my humanitarian side of the change." This is the testimony of a Boston wholesale liquor dealer, and it shows the sentiment that is gradually growing up against the traffic in liquor.

Sometimes a word is a very expensive thing and may cost the one who speaks it more than he is willing to pay. A certain lawyer sometime ago, in Chicago, applied the appellation of "lobster" to another of his own profession. Promptly, Judge Tuley, who does not believe in having human beings designated by bivalvular and crustacean names, and who insists on upholding the dignity of his court and the propriety of the English language, fined the offender \$30. It was rather high priced salad, especially as it was only imaginary, but it was a timely administration, and hereafter the lawyers of Chicago will be a little careful as to the names they apply to their brothers in the profession. The price of a word! It can not always be calculated in dollars and cents. Words have been spoken that cost human lives, nations and empires; others have carried with them, as on swift wings they bore their message, blessing and peace, saving grace as powerful as others have been destructive. A wonderful thing is a word!

The subject of funeral reform is receiving the attention of the ministry, more especially in our large cities, tho the reform needs to be extended to rural districts. Rev. E. R. Donehue, Pittsburg, Pa., raises his voice in behalf of reformation along this line. He pleads against Sunday funerals as unfair to the clergymen and advises less expense and display. Is there anything less warrented than the extravagance one often witnesses on funeral occasions? Shall custom and fashion make us slaves to such extravagance? Shall mere custom triumph over common sense and intelligence? There is no time that economy is more to be recommended to the family in modern circumstances than when death has inflicted the greatest possible loss. The disposition at such times is always to needless display, especially so when suggested by outsiders whose only interest in the matter is the money they can make out of it. All such display should be discouraged. A plain funeral, one within the limits of the means of those interested is more respectful to the dead than pomp that can be ill-afforded. Again, too often burial of the dead is unnecessarily delayed in waiting for the Sabbath. Why should this be so? As a rule the pastor has from two to three services each Sabbath, perhaps more, and why should he be burdened with another? These things are wrong and a reform looking toward the correction of these evils will be welcomed, by the ministry at least, and should be by all thoughtful Christian people.

Mr. Chamberlain, speaking of the drink evil almost ten years ago, very forcibly, because truthfully, said, "Drink is the curse of the country; it ruins fortunes, it injures the health, it destroys the lives of one in twenty of its population: and anything that can be done to diminish this terrible sacrifice of human life and happiness is worthy of all the attention and study we can give it. If we are silent the very stones will cry out. If I could destroy to-morrow the desire for strong drink in the people of England, what changes we should see! We should see our jails and work-houses empty, and we should see more lives saved in twelve months than are consumed in a century of bitter and savage war." The same thing could be said of any country that permits the traffic in strong drink, and the marvel is that statesmen and others high in office who know these things do not take some step to remedy the evil. What is true of

England is true of America as well. Some day, some where, some how, this greatest of all curses will be wiped out of existence. A purely Christian civilization will not longer tolerate the saloon. If the drink habit had one redeeming feature about it there might be some excuse for the existence of the saloon, but it is evil and evil only, and as such, according to an eternal law, it must give way to something more fitting.

Information Bureau

Should Christian women wear an artificial covering during the time of prayer? Does the gospel require such a covering?

The querist and others interested are referred to the tract by J. L. Gillin, "The Prayer Covering." This tract answers the question satisfactorily. It can be had of the Publication Board, Ashland O., at the rate of 50 cents per hundred copies, or ten cents per dozen. We do not believe that the gospel makes any such requirement, nor do we believe that the language of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthians will admit of such an interpretation.

Does the Brethren church make trine immersion a test of membership, and if so, does that necessarily unchristianize other denominations?

(1) The Brethren church believes and teaches trine immersion as apostolic baptism, the baptism commanded by the Savior in the last great Commission when he said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The Brethren church believes and teaches that this commission requires a trine action, one into each of the names of the Holy Trinity. (2) No, the Brethren church does not unchristianize other denominations. It is not within the power of any one people to do that. If there are Christians in other denominations, and we know there are, the Brethren church is as powerless to unchristianize them as it is to make them Christians. It is not our business to say who is and who is not Christian. It is our business to teach the whole gospel and make every lawful effort to persuade people to accept the gospel we preach. We firmly believe that the only apostolic baptism is that administered by trine immersion, but there are others who do not believe that. Christ is their judge, not the Brethren church. The Brethren church may consistently recognize other denominations as Christians, and yet hold strictly to its distinctive doctrines.

Mr. Editor, what scripture reference can you give for the editorial in last week's paper about there being many suns and worlds, and that this world is insignificant compared with them?

So writes a reader of the paper. Replying will say that we have no scripture to prove that there are thousands of other worlds and suns larger than those visible to the naked eye and with which we are familiar. Both Abraham and David speak of innumerable stars in the heavens, a number so great that no man can count them. Science has demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt that such worlds and suns exist somewhere in the universe. Whether there are other worlds inhabited we have as yet no way of knowing, but we are inclined to believe there are. This of course is a matter of opinion. However, the existence of other and larger worlds and suns than those with which we feel ourselves acquainted is not a matter of opinion, but of fact. The Bible speaks of a firmament, the heaven of heavens, and like many other mysteries, the Lord has left to his people the very agreeable labor of working them out. These discoveries and systematic arrangements of facts we call science, and marvelous has been its progress within the last 25 years, and more marvelous yet will it be during the next 25 years.